

Long Beach Scores Hit With 'West Side Story'

By JERRY REYNOLDS
Press-Herald Staff Writer

The Long Beach Civic Light Opera Association has a smashing hit on its stage with the current production of "West Side Story," the controversial musical which took Broadway by surprise in 1957 and has since become increasingly popular.

This is a modern version of Shakespeare's tragic love story of Romeo and Juliet translated into the streets of America's biggest city. The conflict here is between two teenage gangs and a love that cannot be.

Under the careful and deliberate direction of Ron Hogue, CLO's "West Side Story" is staged with all the vigor, excitement, and emotion that makes the drama the classic it has become. Hogue is a master craftsman and his direction sets a new standard of excellence for the 18-year-old Civic Light Opera.

THERE IS first perfect casting — from the leading roles of Maria and Tony to the supporting roles of Doc and Schrank. As Maria, Marlene Silvers, whose beauty and magnificent voice are especially suited to the role makes her debut on the CLO stage.

As Tony, Steve Taylor, a youthful veteran of CLO productions, is an intense young man whose voice is just right for such songs as "Maria" and "Tonight." Taylor's sensitive portrayal is one of the highlights of "West Side Story."

Principle supporting players include Michael Larsen as Riff, leader of the Jets;

Larry Harper, whose Action Sharks, and the beautiful BUT NO member of the is superb; Ken Baxter as Phyllis Thompson as Anita, cast should be overlooked. Bernardo, leader of the friend and advisor to Maria. The rest of The Jets are



PLAN VOTERS' SERVICE . . . Members of the Torrance League of Women Voters will review all propositions appearing on the Nov. 8 ballot at a public meeting Thursday evening at 7:45 at the Torrance Recreation Center, 3341 Torrance Blvd. Here (from left) Mrs. James van Oppen, voters service chairman; Mrs. William Radcliffe, president of the nonpartisan group; and Mrs. William Birdsall, one of the speakers, get their material ready for the session. (Press-Herald Photo)

Women of Church Set World Day

All area women are invited to attend World Community Day sponsored by the United Church Women. The program will be held at the First Methodist Church, 1551 El Prado, Nov. 4, at noon.

Following a business meeting and sack lunch, prayer and dedication will be held at 1 p.m. Speaker will be the Rev. Jarvis Brown, minister of the First Methodist Church in San Pedro.

Hygiene kits and children's clothing, made by the woman and marked for Southeast Asia, will be dedicated.

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The girls include Maryann Bennett, Margie Metzger, Kathy McFadden, Beth Fidler, Terri Neilson, Christine Mills, Wynne Wilson, Nancy Myers, Dorothy Carroll, Jean-

Special commendations are earned by choreographer and Saturday, Oct. 28 and Nov. 4 and 5. Matti-Cris Timmons, who has conveyed all the conflicts of "West Side Story" in his dance routines. Timmons' version of the Dream Ballet scene is one of the most haunting scenes of the show. Musical director Jack Kroesen and the Civic Light Opera orchestra also rate special citations for a superb effort.

ABOUT THE only thing wrong with CLO's "West Side Story" is the length of the run — three weeks is simply too short. Evening performances are scheduled Friday and Saturday, Oct. 28 and Nov. 4 and 5. Matti-Cris Timmons, who has conveyed all the conflicts of "West Side Story" in his dance routines. Timmons' version of the Dream Ballet scene is one of the most haunting scenes of the show. Musical director Jack Kroesen and the Civic Light Opera orchestra also rate special citations for a superb effort.

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